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# A TAME RAT.

I have for the last twenty years never been without a tame rat. The "monkey-room" is the general refuge for the sick animal belonging to my friends, and many are those animals who come into this hospital. I almost forget where the rat I am writing about came from. I believe he was once a record from an unfriendly and being swallowed by the anti-eater at the Zoological Gardens. This rat has the bump of curiosity strongly developed, and nothing places him so much as to make an inspection of my writing-table. He creeps cautiously about and examines everything, his object being to steal. What he likes best is lamp-glass. My sugar-bowl originally cost a penny, like the Portland Vase, it has been smashed and broken so often that it is impossible to estimate its present value. The cause of these numerous fractures is the rat, who, when he wants a bit of sugar, stands up on his hind-legs, supporting himself with his tail in a tripod-like fashion, and upsets the sugar-bowl; then selecting a lamp, he bolts with it. It is a remarkable fact that the rat never eats in the open; he takes all he steals back to his home. In order to do this, he has to go on to the mantle-piece, which is about eighteen inches above the writing-table, to enable him to accomplish this I have put up for him a rat-ladder, built somewhat on the lines of a salmon-ladder. After I had shown him once or twice how to get up this ladder, he very soon learned what he had to do. I have known him scramble up his ladder with objects which for a rat must be of considerable weight. One day I saw him steal a whole raw herring. Having tried the best way to carry it, he ultimately picked it up at the right point where it balanced. When he arrived at the round hole which leads to the sleeping compartment of the squirrel's cage he was pulled up short by the ladder, which was crossed in his mouth. I was curious to see what he would do. He dropped the herring and seemed to consider. Having quickly made up his mind he adopted the following plan: Leaving the herring outside he went into the cage, and turning short round, seized it by the head, and hauled it in with the greatest ease. The muscles about the neck of the rat are very strong, giving him great power to use his wedge-shaped head whether for boring or carrying. He uses his tail to steer himself, and when climbing, works it as a rope-dancer works his balancing pole. The rat is a great stealer of bits of paper, and any loose pieces he can find he carries away. When the post comes in, in the morning, therefore, the rat has the envelopes as a perquisite. These he tears into little bits, and makes a very comfortable nest with them.—*Frank Buchanan, Notes and Jottings From Animal Life.*

## AN ALMIGHTY 1600.

A double-headed man stands before a banquet taking the covers off the meats, to represent January; it was the season for the tale and good cheer. A man on a stool represents February; he has taken off one shoe, and holds the muffled foot and both his hands close to a blazing fire. It is "wry" weather out of doors, and shelter is acceptable. A girl represents March. She is in a garden that has palms round it, with here and there a timber alcove, and she is hoeing. It is time to prepare the ground. In April a man plows, his plow drawn by two horses. In May a girl, seated, takes a bath in a tub in a garden, holding a small tree-bough in her hand. In June, a man chops wood, his axe swinging far and high behind him with strong muscle. It is time to thin the forests, forcing being thick. In July, a man has his scythe out cutting grass, flowers shooting up among it freely. In August, a girl uses a sickle Norma-like, only cutting straight-up-cloves-grown corn. In September, a man is gathering grapes, a wine-press near. In October, a man is upon a ladder gathering apples from the tree, a full sack erect upon the ground, a basket for the immediate gathering hanging on a branch. In November, a man chops again, great living trees-trunks this time, the living trees of background quite bare. It is time to think of shelter, timber being universal for it, (mainly) timber being abundant, and needing the seasoning which winter will give time for. In December, a man is ready to hear his hatchet down upon an animal's throat, a lad holding the poor brute's head back to receive the blow.—*All the Year Round.*

## A SCOTCH SUNDAY.

To go to bed in broad daylight, and, waking from the first doze, to see the hills faintly touched with the blush of dawn—such is night in Skye in the short but brilliant summer of these high latitudes. And now it is Sunday morning. A profound stillness everywhere—the stillness of a Scotch Sabbath. Even the cocks don't crow, nor do the hens cluck, as far as one can hear, and the old colley, who is the first to greet me on coming down, has a subdued and thoughtful expression on his honest face. I am not the first down, however. A shrewd dogmatic-looking Scotchman is already seated on the bench outside the hotel, and in reply to my greeting of "A fine morning," replies cautiously, "Yes, it's fine now, but I'm doubtful about its lasting."—*All the Year Round.*

## WOMAN AS A BARBER.

Experience has taught a St. Louis proprietor that woman as a barber is not an unqualified success. He says the chances are she'll get stuck on some fellow, or one will get washed on her, and that settles the whole business. And when it gets that way, he'll sit around for half a day with half a dozen empty chairs in sight rather than let any one but her shave him, and she, it she's wifey on him, will be the other half day getting away with a beard that she's started. A girl is all right in her place, but her place ain't in a barber shop, in my opinion.

## THE MULE AND THE IRISHMAN.

An Irishman who had hitched a mule in the neighborhood of a spot where squamen were engaged in blowing, was caught by one of them to take the animal away. "Never mind me," replied Pat; "I'm content if you are." "Yes, but don't you know that the can by the post there contains dynamite?" "Dynamite, is it? Well, this, if it's got fustian, yes, but better remove it where it won't be harmed, for if that mule gets the fustian, I wouldn't give much for it."

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